



PRESS RELEASE

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ILLEGAL ALIEN FOUND GUILTY OF CONSPIRACY TO POSSESS WITH INTENT TO DISTRIBUTE 328 POUNDS OF MARIJUANA

TUCSON - The U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona announced that on February 15, 2005, Manuel Pulido-Guerra, 22, of Caborca, Sonora, Mexico, was found guilty of Conspiracy to Possess with the Intent to Distribute 100 to 1,000 Kilograms of Marijuana and Possession with the Intent to Distribute 100 to 1,000 Kilograms of Marijuana, by a federal jury in Tucson, Arizona.

The evidence at trial showed that Manuel Pulido-Guerra, an illegal alien, was part of a group that backpacked the bales of marijuana into the United States from Mexico. Pulido-Guerra was apprehended, in Sells, Arizona, after two vehicles, that were observed speeding and driving in tandem, drove into and parked at a multi-health complex on the Tohono O'odham Indian Nation. The drivers of both vehicles fled the area but 149.1 kilograms (328.7 pounds) of marijuana was subsequently recovered from the back seat area and trunk of the lead vehicle, a Dodge Stratus. Pulido-Guerra was found in the front passenger seat of the second vehicle, a Dodge Dakota Truck, and acknowledged his involvement in bringing the marijuana into the United States but claimed he should only be responsible for the approximately 20 kilograms (44 pounds) he supposedly carried on his back. The driver of the truck was later apprehended but was acquitted.

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Pulido-Guerra had been charged with violating Title 21 of the United States Code, Section 846, and Title 21 of the United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 841(b)(1)(B)(vii). The case was tried before United States District Court Judge Raner C. Collins in a 5 day trial that began on February 8, 2005.

Convictions for Conspiracy to Possess with the Intent to Distribute 100 to 1,000 Kilograms of Marijuana and Possession with the Intent to Distribute 100 to 1,000 Kilograms of Marijuana carry maximum penalties of 40 years incarceration, a \$2 million dollar fine or both.

The investigation leading to the guilty verdict was conducted by the Tohono O'odham Indian Nation Police Department and the U.S. Bureau of Immigration and Custom Enforcement, with the assistance of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.

Pulido-Guerra is being held in custody, and sentencing is set before Judge Collins on April 26, 2005.

The prosecution was handled by Melinda K. Mendes, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona

CASE NUMBER: CR-04-1117-TUC-RCC
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